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to germinate in this, but when washed with pure water several times they germinated. These experiments suggest that perhaps fungi can be successfully combated with fungicides of far less strength than now employed.

BRIEFER ARTICLES.

Oligonema.—In my recent paper upon the new species of Mr. Pringle's last year's collection in Mexico I founded a new genus, *Oligonema*, upon a remarkable asteroid composite. I supposed that I had taken all possible pains to make sure that the name was not preoccupied, but I have since learned through the kindness of Mr. C. F. Peck that there is a genus of the same name among the *Myxomycetes*, established by Rostafinski. As it is necessary, therefore, to make a change, I propose to substitute the meaningless name *Golionema*, formed by simply changing the position of a single letter and in some degree suggestive of the original. The new species consequently becomes **Golionema heterophyllum.**—SERENO WATSON, *Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

EDITORIAL.

THOSE ARE not particularly difficult questions which Professor MacMillan asks in "Open Letters."

The only answer to the first is, "that depends." The answer is certainly not to be found in any cast-iron rules, though the inexperienced may fondly imagine so. If we understand the problems of nomenclature they require a judicial attitude on the part of the student. He has a code of laws—doubtless imperfect; doubtless capable of improvement by the application of the two decades of experience which has been acquired since they were framed—and by the principles set forth in this code he is to be guided. In addition to the code he is to use his common sense — if he has any — in determining what name is to stand. What were the use of the judge on the bench if he have no discretion in the interpretation, application or even suspension of the law in particular cases? To say that the laws of nomenclature are to be inflexible and of universal applicability is quite as absurd as to endeavor to make civil statutes so. It would be wonderfully convenient if this could be attained, even with the law of priority, but it seems quite impossible to secure rigidity without absurdity.